

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 14874

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (MRN 14874 VICE 4874)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR UNGA KS KN ET

SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S CONVERSATION WITH HEAD OF STATE

REF: A. STATE 289256, B. ADDIS 14332, C. STATE 29U9U3

1. AMBASSADOR , ACCOMPANIED BY DCM, ON DEC 27 SAW PMAC CHAIRMAN
TEFERI BANTE, FON MIN KIFLE, CHAIRMAN DIRG POLITICAL COMMITTEE
MAJOR SISAY, ANDMEMBER DIRG POLITICAL COMMITTEE CAPT. WOOBICHET.

2. AMB USED VERBATIM LANGUAGE PARAS TWO THROUGH SIX OF REF A
(ON LOREA VOTE), AND FOLLOWED WITH PARAS TWO THROUGH FIVE OF REF
B, INSERTING, BEFORE PENULTIMATE SENTENCE IN PARA FIVE, THE
SUBSTANCE OF PARA ONE OF REF C(ON KIFLE'S REMARKS TO SECRETARY SEPT
30).

3. AMB THEN SAID (IN LIEU OF PARA SIX REFB):

QUOTE I AM SPEAKING ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM WASHINGTON
WHERE YOUR GOVERNMENT'S VOT ON KOREA AND THE EXPLANATION THAT
YOU GAVE FOR THAT VOTE AS PARTICULARLY DISTURBING, AND TRIGGERED
THESE MORE GENERAL REPRESENTATIONS. I HAVE MENTIONED
ONLY SOME OF THE MORE IMPORTANT IRRITANTS IN OUR RELATIONS;
THERE AREMANY MORE IRRITANTS THAT I HAVE NOT MENTIONED.

MY GOVERNMENT HOPES THAT AFTER YOU HAVE CONSIDERED WHAT
I HAVE SAID, WE WILL SEE YOUR GOVERNMENT PAYING CLOSER

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ATTENTION TO THOSE FEW ISSUES ON WHICH THE US GOVERNMENT

FEELS STRONGLY; THAT WE WILL BEGINS GETTING RESPONSES TO OUR DIPLOMATIC NOTES AND OTHER DEMARCHES; THAT WE WILL ALSO RECEIVE EXPLANATIONS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT'S THINKING IN CASES WHERE THE ACTION WE DESIRE IS NOT TAKEN; AND THAT THERE WILL BE BETTER CONCRETE EVIDENCE AVAILABLE THAT YOU DO IN FACT ATTACH SOME IMPORTANCE TO YOUR RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. END QUOTE

4. TEFERI THEN ADDRESSED SOME OF THE ITEMS RAISED BY AMB.

A. HE SAID HE WISHED TO ASSURE AMB THAT HE TOOK CAREFUL NOTE OF THE VIEWS AMB HAD EXPRESSED ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM WASHINGTON. IN FACT, EPMG ALWAYS TRIED TO TAKE US VIEWS INTO ACCOUNT. IN HIS JUDGMENT, THERE WAS A LARGE MEASURE OF IDENTITY OF VIEWS AND INTERESTS; THERE WERE OTHERS WHERE USG COULD NOT EXPECT EPMG TO BE IN FULL AGREEMENT. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THAT WE SHOULD ADDRESS THOSE ISSUES WHERE WE DIFFER, NONE OF WHICH SEEMED TO HIM SHOULD BE CAUSE OF ANY REAL DIFFICULTIES IN OUR RELATIONS.

B. TEFERI, IN REFERRING TO FIRST DISCUSSION WITH AMB LAST APRIL, SAID THAT AMB HAD CORRECTLY RECALLED EPMG MISGIVINGS. HE WAS HAPPY TO SAY NOW THAT USG RESPONSIVENESS HAD HELPED TO DISPEL THESE MISGIVINGS AND HE WANTED TO EXPRESS EPMG APPRECIATION THEREFOR NOT ONLY TO USG BUT TO AMB PERSONALLY.

C. ON COMPENSATION, EPMG UNDERSTOOD THAT MATTER WAS OF GREAT CONCERN TO US AND HAD THEREFORE GIVEN ATTENTION TO THE PROBLEM. IN VERY NEAR FUTURE (DURING COURSE OF THIS WEEK) LEGISLATION WILL BE PUBLISHED IN OFFICIAL GAZETTE ESTABLISHING A COMMISSION TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM. EPMG HAD KEPT EMBASSY INFORMED, IF NOT FORMALLY, AND HE HOPED THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMISSION WOULD DISPEL ANY BITTERNESS ON THIS SUBJECT.

D. RE KOREA VOTES, EPMG HAS EXPLAINED ITS VIEWS TO USG IN TERMS OF EPMG NATIONAL CONCERNS. EPMG FELT THAT IT NEEDED NONALIGNED SUPPORT EVEN THOUGH IT WAS NOT ENTIRELY IN AGREEMENT WITH THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES. HE NOTED THAT ON SOME OTHER ISSUES EPMG HAD DEPARTED FROM MAJORITY NON-ALIGNED POSITION.

E. TURNING TO ASMARA KIDNAPPINGS, TEFERI SAID USG SHOULD KNOW OF EPMG'S CONCERN RE FATE OF KIDNAPPERS. EPMG FOLLOWS
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SITUATION CAREFULLY AND IS DOING WHATEVER IS POSSIBLE TO SAVE THEIR LIVES. WITH REGARD TO BROADCASTS, IT WAS NOT THAT EPMG DID NOT WISH TO BE RESPONSIVE TO FAMILIES, BUT EPMG SAW RADIO REQUEST IN POLITICAL TERMS, AND FEARED THAT ONCE THEY AGREED TO BROADCAST, THERE WOULD BE NO END TO IT AND THAT REQUESTS OF A POLITICAL NATURE WOULD BE MADE BY THE CAPTORS.

F. ON EXCHANGE OF SECURITY INFORMATION (PARA THREE-F
REF B) HE TOOK NOTE OF US VIEWS AND SAID "SOME ADJUSTMENT

IS NECESSARY."

G. TEFERI CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT EPMG VALUED AND ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO RELATIONS WITH US, AND HAS EVERY INTENTION OF PRESERVING THEM ON BASIS OF MUTUAL RESPECT AND EQUALITY. ETHIOPIA IS COUNTRY GOING THROUGH CHANGE WHICH MIGHT CREATE MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT WHAT EPMG IS TRYING TO DO. PRIORITIES MAY BE SEEN DIFFERENTLY BY OTHERS, BUT TEFERI DID NOT VIEW USG EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN AS NECESSARILY HAVING SERIOUS EFFECT ON BILATERAL RELATIONS.

5. AMB THEN SAID HE WOULD WISH TO FOLLOW UP ON THESE SUBJECTS, AND OTHERS OF CONCERN TO USG, IN CONVERSATIONS WITH FONMIN AND OTHER OFFICIALS, INCLUDING MAJOR SISAY, WITH WHOM AMB HAD BEEN SEEKING AN APPOINTMENT FOR NEARLY SIX WEEKS. AMB SAID THAT SUCH CONTACTS AT "HIGHER DECISION-MAKING LEVELS" OF EPMG MIGHT HELP REDUCE FUTURE MISUNDERSTANDINGS. SISAY AT END OF CONVERSATION TOLD AMB THAT AN APPOINTMENT WOULD BE ARRANGED FOR FOLLOWING WEEK.

6. COMMENT ATMOSPHERE WAS CORDIAL, AND THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE WHATEVER OF EPMG UMBRAGE AT DIRECT AND ACCUSATORY NATURE OF AMB'S REMARKS. CHAIRMAN, WHO AS USUAL DID ALL THE TALKING FOR EPMG SIDE, SEEMED SOMEWHAT DEFENSIVE. HE TOOK PAINS TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT USG ACTIONS SINCE APRIL 15 CONVERSATION HAD DISPELLED EPMG SUSPICIONS OF USG. HIS EXPLANATIONS OF KOREAN VOTE SIMPLY REITERATED PAST STATEMENTS IN SLIGHTLY SOFTER FORM. HIS REMARKS ON REFUSAL TO BROADCAST KAGNEW FAMILY MESSAGES GAVE COHERENT (ALBEIT NOT PERSUASIVE) RATIONALE WHICH WE HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN BEFORE. IN EFFECT HE ADMITTED ERROR (VERY SURPRISINGLY FOR THIS COUNTRY) IN NOT HAVING PERMITTED ADEQUATE SECURITY LIAISON AND SIAD APPROPRIATE STEPS WOULD BE TAKEN.

7. WE WILL BE FOLLOWING UP ON ALL THESE MATTERS, AS WELL AS OTHERS, IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATIONS, FIRST WITH MAJOR SISAY
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AND FONMIN. AMB INTENDS ALSO TO SEEK APPOINTMENT WITH CHAIRMAN OF DIRG ECONOMIC COMMITTEE FOR DISCUSSION OF ECONOMIC SUBJECTS.

8. CONCERNING SUBSTANCE OF DISCUSSIONS, WE PLAN TO GIVE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM OF INFORMATION TO A FEW FRIENDLY EMBASSIES HERE, AND NONE TO THE PRESS. LOCAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE HERALD CARRIED BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENT SAYING "THE AMBASSADOR COMMUNICATED TO THE CHAIRMAN A MESSAGE FROM HIS GOVT RELATING TO BILATERAL RELATIONS." LOCAL TV ALSO CARRIED BRIEF FILM COVERAGE OF MEETING.
HUMMEL

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